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ACTION WHA-00

INFO	LOG-00	MFA-00	EEB-00	AID-00	A-00	RPPR-00	CA-00
	INL-00	DODE-00	PDI-00	DS-00	UTED-00	SIPD-00	DIAS-00
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OCS-00	OES-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	PRS-00	P-00
	SP-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	ASDS-00	BBG-00	DSCC-00
	LBA-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SAS-00	FA-00	/000W

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RELEASED IN FULL

FM AMCONSUL MATAMOROS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0422

INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

HQ BICE INTEL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

HQ NORAD USNORTHCOM INTEL PETERSON AFB CO IMMEDIATE

ICE CORPUS CHRISTI TX IMMEDIATE

DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

DEA MCALLEN TX IMMEDIATE

EPIC EL PASO TX IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

FBI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MATAMOROS 000148

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 13526: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, ASEC, SNAR, KJUS, MX, PHUM, CASC

SUBJECT: More Mass Graves Found in Tamaulipas: Body Total Now 81

REF: A) 11 MATAMOROS 146;

1. (SBU) Following the discovery of more mass graves (narcofosas) in the San Fernando area April 7 and 8, the total count of bodies found since April 1, including those reported in reftel, has reached 81 in 17 burial sites. Federal officials believe that the majority of the bodies belong to people kidnapped from public buses in the San Fernando area by Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO) members in recent weeks. Post has reports of at least two US citizens kidnapped from buses in this area during this period and is working with authorities to verify whether they are among the victims.

2. (SBU) Since reftel, post has learned more about the investigation that lead to the discovery of the bodies. On March 19, according to officials, TCO members kidnapped 24 people from a public bus which originated in San Luis Potosi, heading north to the border

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city of Reynosa. On March 24 TCO members kidnapped 12 people from a bus originating in Michoacan. Also on March 24, TCO members kidnapped all 48 passengers off a bus driving from Guanajuato to Reynosa. All three attacks occurred near San Fernando, Tamaulipas.

3. (SBU) According to federal officials, the families of the Michoacan kidnapping victims reported the first March 24 bus kidnapping to authorities in Michoacan and this prompted a Mexican army (SEDENA) Special Operations investigation in San Fernando. On April 1 SEDENA captured six presumed TCO members and liberated five kidnapping victims. The five kidnapping victims came from Victoria (one), Queretaro (three) and San Luis Potosi (one). The victims reported that they had been in captivity for two weeks. Acting on information obtained from the detainees and victims, on April 1 SEDENA located six mass grave sites in La Joya, a small community north of San Fernando. The mass graves contained a total of 11 bodies. Officials estimate that the victims had been killed approximately one month ago.

4. (SBU) On April 6 SEDENA forces captured another five presumed TCO members and located two more mass grave sites about 30km from the La Joya sites, containing a total of 48 bodies. Authorities estimate that these victims were killed 7-10 days previously.

5. (SBU) On April 7 SEDENA forces rescued three kidnapping victims and located two more mass grave sites containing a total of 13 bodies killed 7-10 days previously. Also on April 7 SEDENA rescued three people kidnapped from a bus originating in San Luis Potosi and discovered one grave site containing a total of three bodies in the Las Norias area south of San Fernando. On April 8 officials discovered another six bodies in six graves in the same area. Of the bodies discovered in Las Norias, four appear to have been dead for approximately one month and five for more than a month.

6. (SBU) According to federal officials, the vast majority of the remains appear to have been beaten to death. A small number had bullet wounds. Official sources say they believe that many individuals taken from buses have not been reported and authorities are continuing to search the area for them or their remains. The 14 presumed TCO members are in Mexico City in the custody of the Office of Special Investigations of Organized Crime (SIEDO).

7. (SBU) Comment: Federal officials say they believe that the Los Zetas TCO is responsible for the killings. This is consistent with local press coverage. Zeta-held towns have almost no newspaper coverage of the discoveries, while in Matamoros, home to the rival Gulf Cartel, local papers are running full front page stories about the massacre. Federal officials, noting that many of the kidnapping victims came from poor states where migration rates are high, believe that the majority of the victims discovered were migrants heading to

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the US who were intercepted en route and unable to pay what was demanded of them.

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